United Nations

Daily Highlights

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FRIDAY HIGHLIGHTS

+ General Assembly extends mandate of United Nations component of MICIVIH for one year; asks Secretary-General to strengthen Mission's presence in Haiti.

+ Security Council appoints Richard Goldstone, South African national, as Prosecutor of International Tribunal for war crimes committed in former Yugoslavia.

+ Government of Yemen informs Secretary-General of immediate cease-fire in accordance with recent Security Council resolutions; affirms respect for democracy and human rights, and commitment to national dialogue.

+ Special Representative for Rwanda holds talks with RPF and Government in hope of concluding cease-fire agreement next week; United Nations prepares inter-agency humanitarian appeal on behalf of country.

+ Member States owe United Nations more than $3 billion as of 30 June; almost $1 billion owed to regular budget and $2.1 billion to peace-keeping.

+ PLO Chairman Arafat, in message to Palestine Symposium in Toronto, urges non-governmental organizations to support rebuilding of Palestinian society.

+ More than 150 countries to observe World Population Day on 11 July as UNFPA prepares for upcoming Cairo Conference.

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The General Assembly today extended the mandate of the United Nations component of the joint United Nations/Organization of American States (OAS) Interntional Civilian Mission in Haiti (MICIVIH) for one year. The Assembly took that action in a resolution adopted without a vote.

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The Assembly asked the Secretary-General to expedite and strengthen the Mission's presence in Haiti, and reiterated the need for the prompt return of President Jean-Bertrand Aristide to restore democracy in Haiti. It also reiterated that any entity resulting from actions of the de facto regime, including the installation of a provisional president on 11 May, was illegitimate.

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The Security Council today appointed Richard J. Goldstone as Prosecutor of the International Tribunal for war crimes committed in the former Yugoslavia. In took that action by adopting resolution 936 (1994) without a vote, approving the nomination by Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali.

Mr. Goldstone, a South African national, has served as a Judge of the Appellate Division of South Africa's Supreme Court, and as Chairman of the Standing Commission of Inquiry regarding Public Violence and Intimidation.

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The Government of Yemen has informed Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali of an immediate cease-fire in the country in accordance with Security Council resolutions 924 (1994) and 931 (1994). In a letter delivered to the Secretary-General last night by Abdelkarem Al-Eryani, Yemen's Minister for Planning and Development, the Government also announced the start of relief operations in and around Aden.

The letter affirmed the Government's respect for democracy, political pluralism and human rights, and its commitment to national dialogue in the framework of constitutional legitimacy. It also affirmed that Yemen would cooperate with other States in the region, on the basis of respect for territorial integrity and non-intervention in domestic affairs, in accordance with the United Nations Charter. During his meeting with Mr. Al-Eryani, the Secretary-General stressed the importance of full and immediate implementation of those commitments.

President Ali Abdallah Saleh today telephoned the Secretary-General and confirmed his Government's commitment to the principles set out in the letter. He also expressed his desire to cooperate fully with the United Nations.

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The Secretary-General's Special Representative for Rwanda, Shahryar Khan, has been holding discussions with the Rwandese Patriotic Front (RPF) and the Government in the hope that a cease-fire document can be signed next week, a United Nations spokesman said today. Meanwhile, the Organization was preparing a consolidated inter-agency appeal on behalf of the country. It was expected that the appeal would be finalized over the weekend and launched next week.

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The spokesman said it was difficult to assess the humanitarian needs of the affected population in Rwanda and in neighbouring countries because of the magnitude of the crisis. The appeal would also identify and specify the roles and responsibilities of the different humanitarian agencies operating in the region.

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As of 30 June, Member States owed the United Nations a total of $3.05 billion, according to the latest update on the Organization's financial situation. Of that amount, $950 million was for assessments for the regular budget and $2.1 billion was for peace-keeping operations.

The United States -- the largest debtor -- owed $530 million to the regular budget and $750 million to the peace-keeping budget. Japan and the Russian Federation had regular budget contributions outstanding for the current year, but not for previous years. However, the Russian Federation owed some $540 million in total peace-keeping contributions.

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The Chairman of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), Yasser Arafat, has urged non-governmental organizations to continue to support the rebuilding of Palestine. In a message to the Eleventh Annual Symposium on the Question of Palestine in Toronto, he said Palestinians faced a major challenge in establishing autonomy. The message was delivered on Wednesday by Nasser Al-Kidwa, Permanent Observer for Palestine to the United Nations.

Mr. Arafat expressed the hope that the United Nations would strengthen its ties with non-governmental organizations in order to create a civil Palestinian society that respected human rights. The Chairman of the Palestine Rights Committee, M. Kéba Birane Cissé, said such support was needed to rebuild the Palestinian economy and to restore respect for human rights in areas still occupied.

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More than 150 countries will observe World Population Day on 11 July, according to the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA). The 1994 commemoration is being held against the backdrop of the International Conference on Population and Development in Cairo next September. The UNFPA has invited Governments, institutions and private citizens to take part in the observances and to help raise awareness of the Conference. Events planned for the Day include rallies and speeches by national and local leaders, lectures, media programmes, exhibitions and sports events. World Population Day was first celebrated in 1987, when the number of people on earth reached 5 billion.

"World Population Day reminds us that the future depends on reaching a balance between numbers and natural resources," according to UNFPA Executive Director Nafis Sadik. "It is a day to recognize what we need to do to make the future secure for the generations to come."

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